

Clear Creek Management Area Draft RMP/EIS

2.0 MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

This chapter details seven land use management alternatives considered for the Clear Creek Management Area (CCMA) Resource Management Plan (RMP). Program area emphasis and allowable public use within each of the alternatives and the management actions proposed for each program under each alternative are described in this chapter. The land use management alternatives described in this chapter address identified issues, management concerns, and current and projected future uses of the BLM-administered public lands in the CCMA.

Due to concerns associated with protection of human health and the environment, this RMP/EIS has been organized so that 1) recreation, 2) public health and safety, and 3) transportation are addressed in the first three sections of each chapter to allow the reader to assess key information related to the human health risks from exposure to airborne asbestos fibers in CCMA.

2.1 Overview of the Range of Alternatives

The alternatives presented here incorporate guidance provided by numerous laws, mandates, policies, and plans. These include the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and BLM planning guidance. As a result, many of BLM's goals, objectives, and management actions are applicable to many alternatives or common to all alternatives. These management actions are combined, where possible, under the range of alternatives based on the location and intensity of Motorized and Non-motorized activities within CCMA. These include management actions for recreation, public health and safety, biological resources, air, water, soils, fire management, livestock grazing, energy and minerals, cultural and heritage resources, paleontological resources, visual resources management, social and economic conditions, and special designations.

Based on the purpose and need identified in Chapter 1, the range of alternatives for the CCMA RMP/EIS includes multiple public use scenarios in the Serpentine ACEC: five of which entail Motorized access (Alternatives A, B, C, D, and E), one Non-motorized access alternative (Alt. F), and one alternative that considers closure of the Serpentine ACEC to all forms of public entry (Alt. G). The anticipated effects and the need to implement proposed management actions or mitigation measures would vary depending on the public use scenarios associated with each alternative.

In general, Section(s) 2.4.1 through 2.4.18 describe a 'range of alternatives' comprised of different combinations of BLM management actions, resource allocations, and allowable uses that BLM has determined are 'reasonable' to consider based the purpose and need for the CCMA RMP/EIS and the issues identified during the public scoping period. Additional management actions or mitigation measures that would be necessary to manage multiple-uses or protect resources (including public health and safety) under the range of alternatives are identified in Sections 2.4.1 – 2.4.18.

At the end of this Chapter, Section 2.5 identifies a combination of management actions, resource allocations, and allowable uses chosen from among the range of alternatives that represents BLM's 'Preferred Alternative' for lands administered by the HFO in the CCMA. This method of selecting program area emphasis and combinations of management actions for land use planning is known as the "menu approach" (ref. Section 1.2.2). Alternatives considered but not analyzed in detail are discussed in this chapter as well. The analysis of the environmental consequences, effectiveness of mitigation measures, and the feasibility of implementing the range of alternatives is presented in Chapter 4.

The following summarizes the seven alternatives considered in detail in this Draft RMP/EIS: Clear Creek Management Area 2.0 Management Alternatives Draft RMP/EIS

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Alternative A represents the 'No Action' alternative required by NEPA, and would reaffirm current management under the original Hollister RMP (BLM 1984) and its' associated Clear Creek Amendments (1986, 1999, 2006). Alternative A does not take into account the temporary closure of the Serpentine ACEC. Management of recreation opportunities, special status species habitat, and other resources would be maintained at existing levels prior to the May 1, 2008 closure order. This alternative would not modify allowable uses to address emerging issues on public lands; however, this alternative would incorporate new human health risk information into BLM's public outreach and education asbestos hazard information program and new guidance for management of natural and heritage resource, rangelands, energy and minerals, and lands and realty established after the 1984 Hollister RMP, as amended.

Alternative B emphasizes maintaining current multiple use opportunities in CCMA, and would authorize existing uses based on limited annual visitor use days, seasonal use restrictions, and other mitigation measures to protect public health and safety. Resources management would focus on conserving natural and heritage resources that are functioning and restoring natural systems that are degraded. Management would focus on protecting human health and safety by restricting season of use and visitor use days/year, applying dust mitigation on major routes, and by eliminating camping and staging in the Serpentine ACEC.

Alternative C emphasizes limited OHV recreation opportunities in the Serpentine ACEC based on vehicle types, minimum age requirements, and other mitigation measures to protect public health and safety. Resources management would focus on conserving natural and heritage resources that are functioning and restoring natural systems that are degraded. Management would focus on protecting human health and safety by prohibiting access into the ACEC for visitors under age 18, restricting OHV recreation in the ACEC to motorcycle use only, increasing restrictions on season of use, applying dust mitigation on major routes, and by eliminating camping and staging in the Serpentine ACEC.

Alternative D emphasizes vehicle access for non-motorized recreation opportunities inside the Serpentine ACEC, and enhancing new OHV recreation opportunities outside of the ACEC. Resource uses consistent with BLM guidance and within human health risk constraints would be authorized in the ACEC. Emphasis would be on developing OHV recreation opportunities on public lands near Tucker Mtn., Condon Peak, or San Carlos Bolsa (Cantua Zone), where appropriate. Management actions would focus on protecting human health and safety by restricting motorized access in the ACEC to major routes, applying dust mitigation on major routes, installing a public wash rack, and by and eliminating camping and staging in the ACEC.

Alternative E allows for limited vehicle touring through the Serpentine ACEC (ACEC), emphasizes pedestrian use in the ACEC and non-motorized recreation opportunities outside the ACEC. Vehicle touring in the ACEC would be limited to a Scenic Route (Spanish Lake Road) from Idria to Wright Mtn. No OHV use would be allowed in the ACEC. Pedestrian trail day use opportunities would be available at destinations with unique scenic, natural or geologic features in the ACEC. Access into the Serpentine ACEC would be authorized by permit only. Vehicle touring would be limited to less than 5 days/year and pedestrian activity limited to less than 12 days/year. Public health and safety risks would be mitigated by restricting access and use during extreme weather conditions.

Alternative F restricts public access in the Serpentine ACEC to non-motorized recreation only. Public access in the Serpentine ACEC would be limited to foot-traffic only, and non-motorized recreation opportunities would be emphasized at outstanding locations throughout CCMA. Public health and safety risks would be mitigated by restricting access and use during extreme weather conditions. Allowable use restrictions would minimize and reduce risk to public health and safety; and BLM land use authorizations would require terms and conditions to minimize risk to human health and the environment. Clear Creek Management Area 2.0 Management Alternatives Draft RMP/EIS 20

Alternative G emphasizes public health and safety by prohibiting all public access and entry into the Serpentine ACEC. Alternative G would make the existing temporary closure of the 30,000-acre ACEC that was issued by BLM under 43 CFR 8364.1 on May 1, 2008 permanent. Consequently, the impact analysis for Alt. G provides a baseline for comparison of the impacts associated with the temporary closure of the Serpentine ACEC to other management actions within the range of alternatives for the CCMA RMP/EIS. Allowable use restrictions under Alternative G would minimize CCMA visitor exposure to airborne asbestos emissions and represent the most effective way to reduce risk to public health and safety. BLM would also prohibit other resource uses, such as livestock grazing and energy and minerals development under this alternative to ensure overall protection of human health and the environment from hazardous airborne asbestos emissions.

All the alternatives would place importance on partnerships and agreements with landowners, permit holders, and other local and state agencies to manage BLM public lands for multiple uses on a sustainable basis while providing adequate protection of public health and the environment.